

Fish with Salmoriglio Sauce Recipe

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Briny, herbaceous, and fresh, this classic Sicilian dish can be traced back to the time of the Greeks.

Called sammurigghiu in dialect, this style of sauce comes from Sicilia, where centuries of both salt harvesting and fishing made locals experts at preparing their daily fresh catch. (In fact, the word salario, or salary, comes from the word for salt itself, given that Roman soldiers used to earn their pay in bags of the white gold.) "Salmoriglio" itself means "little brine," which is essentially how you season your fish with the sauce before grilling.

To this day, Italians use a "less is more" approach to dressing grilled fish in this simple sauce, allowing the full flavor of the fresh fish itself to shine through. The sauce itself is a subtle emulsion of typical Sicilian flavors, such as extra virgin olive oil, garlic, capers, and oregano. This sauce can be served with many different kinds of fish - the important part is that the fish is as fresh as possible!

Pesce al Salmoriglio (Fish with Salmoriglio Sauce)

Yield: 2 servings

12 oz Atlantic salmon filets
1 1/2 cup mixed root vegetables (celery root, butternut squash, Yukon gold potatoes)
1/4 cup Salmoriglio Sauce (see below)
Salt, to taste
Extra virgin olive oil, for cooking

For the Salmoriglio Sauce (makes enough for 4 people):

Juice from 1 lemon
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/4 cup water
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1/3 cup fresh parsley, finely chopped
1/3 cup fresh oregano, finely chopped
3/4 tsp salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. To prepare the root vegetables, cut into bite-size pieces and according to the shape of the vegetable (wedges work fine). Season with salt and olive oil, and then roast until tender, for about 15 minutes. Allow the vegetables to cool.

Meanwhile, prepare the salmoriglio sauce. In a bowl with a whisk, emulsify the water, lemon juice, and extra virgin olive oil. Then, add the finely chopped garlic, herbs, salt, and pepper to the emulsion and whisk to combine.

Finally, prepare the fish: brush the fish with the salmoriglio sauce to season. Heat the grill or a grill pan, and cook the fish on the grill to medium-well. Nota bene: you can continue to season your fish while cooking, using fresh herbs to brush the fish on each side as it cooks.

To serve, plate the fish and the root vegetables and dress with the salmoriglio sauce. The leftover sauce will keep in the fridge for a few days.

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